

Decatur, Sep
Review

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A New Chief for the CIA

IN THE shadowy sphere of Central Intelligence Agency operations, the job of director is likely to be less glorious than trying. As necessary as undercover work is to the security of the nation, it is a business which the people of a free society find difficult to accept.

In an agency which must keep many secrets from the general public, there is a tendency to suspect the job it is doing. This was, and will remain, a burden the CIA must bear under any director.

As in other endeavors, the CIA is subject to a degree of human error. Such error can prove extremely costly. In an open society governmental mistakes, when they are made known to the public, become the subject of heated discussion and criticism.

Steps were taken following the Cuban invasion debacle of last

spring to better define the functions of the CIA which had assumed responsibilities beyond the proper scope of that agency.

The answer as to the effectiveness of Allen W. Dulles as CIA chief is largely buried in secret files of the agency. But Mr. Dulles' intimacy with the CIA operation will continue to be utilized in his capacity as consultant to the Kennedy administration.

The new head of the agency, John A. McCone, comes to his job with a background of government service under both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations. His leadership will inevitably shape the nature of the Central Intelligence Agency. But his responsibilities are in a well-defined area of intelligence work. This is a job big enough and demanding enough to challenge a capable agency director and a competent staff.